

NORTH CHANNEL STAR

Your News, Your Newspaper

Serving all of the North Shore -- Channelview, Cloverleaf, Sheldon, Galena Park, Jacinto City
VOLUME 8, NO. 49 (#353) THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2020 www.northchannelstar.com

CHANNEL CURRENTS

COVID-19 Cases as of December 8, 2020

HOUSTON AREA 19 COUNTIES

306,274 POSITIVE
3,906 DEATHS
260,270 RECOVERED

TEXAS

1,334,972 POSITIVE
23,195 DEATHS
1,038,806 RECOVERED

UNITED STATES

15,087,418 POSITIVE
285,518 DEATHS
5,714,557 RECOVERED

WORLDWIDE

68,010,230 POSITIVE
1,553,025 DEATHS
43,743,769 RECOVERED

North Channel Branch Library "Bookmas" Drive-up Dec. 19

The North Channel Branch Library will hold a drive-up Bookmas Extravaganza on December 19 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. SANTA will be there to give some wrapped presents to the children that will drive by the Library. Indeed, SANTA's Elves are busy preparing for the Event. Harris County Branch Library, 15741 Wallisville Road, Houston 77049. More info telephone 832-927-5566.

Arts Conversation

Harris County Cultural Arts Council will hold a panel on Revitalizing the Eastside through arts. Public invited, in person or online. Wednesday, Dec. 16 2:00 to 3:30 pm at 13,334 Wallisville Rd. See article on Page 3 for more information.



Jacinto City Fire Department will hold a DRIVE THRU Winter Wonderland Experience on December 12.

A COVID Cautious Christmas this Year Celebrations are different

By Jada Mier

Community Christmas plans have been affected by the ongoing global pandemic. There are a few places where they are either changing things up or are still pushing through despite the disease.

The Channelview Fire Department will be hosting a "Community Gift Card Drive". Due to COVID restrictions, the Annual Community Toy Drive will only be collecting financial donations, which will be

used to purchase Gift Cards to be passed out to those most in need until December 17.

Channelview Fire Department will also be holding a Christmas Parade on the 18th of December starting at 6pm.

Partnering with Free Will Baptist Church, Sheldon Community Fire and Rescue will be accepting new, unwrapped toys for children of all ages. Donations will be accepted until December 20 at 8407 C.E King Pkwy, Houston, TX

77044.

On Saturday, December 12 from 3-6pm the Jacinto City Fire Station will be transformed into a winter wonderland for citizens to drive through this Christmas season. Complete with life sized nutcrackers and presents, the Jacinto City Fire Department has been working to create an unforgettable Christmas experience. Children will have a chance to give Santa their Christmas lists and receive a candy stuffed stocking.

GP Yellowjackets steel curtain shuts out Willowridge Eagles 33 – 0

By Allan Jamail

Houston, TX. - Friday, December 4, 2020 at the GPISD stadium, Head Football Coach Spiro Amarantos' fighting Yellowjackets ended their regular season with another outstanding defensive game. Their 33 to 0 shutout over their 5A District opponent the Fort Bend Willowridge Eagles gave the Jackets their



Isaac Covarrubias #90 Galena Park Yellowjacket junior defensive lineman sacks Eagles quarterback. (Allan Jamail Photo)



Isaac Covarrubias #90 Yellowjacket defensive lineman takes Eagles fumble 65 yards for a TD. (Allan Jamail Photo)

See YELLOWJACKETS, page 6

Scout Troop 673 helps improve Jacinto City Dog Pound

The Jacinto City Dog Pound Rescue has been receiving help from Boy Scout Troop 673 for the past three years. The pound was in need of minor improvements, and new equipment.

This year on November 15th, the troop first gifted the pound with 3 beautiful blue benches. Judy Clarke who currently runs the Pound says "The dogs Love to sit on the benches with us volunteers. We love them!" When the troop saw the containers lack of room, they built shelves and re-organized. Not only did the troop make improvements but they saw a need and provided.

A canopy tent, step ladder, and artificial turf were purchased with money from a fundraiser for the pound. New fencing was put up and old fencing was repaired to keep dogs from escap-



Members of Troop 673 poses with a sun canopy that they will install as part of the Dog Pound improvements they have built this year. See MORE on page 6

ing. Maintenance tasks were also completed like cleaning leaves and getting rid of a wasp nest.

At the end of the day whatever leftover fundraiser money is given to the pound, this year it was a donation of seven hundred sixty-nine dollars.

Judy Clarke, Rebecca Gammag, and Brenda Kocian are extremely grateful to troop leader Jude and his team for coming out and supporting their cause. By Jada Mier

Congratulations to our 2020 Varsity Cheerleaders



Galena Park Yellowjacket Cheerleaders.

Front Row – L – R: Ashlyn Hadnott, Captain Aliyah Silva, Co-Captain Deyanira Ramirez, Mariela Benavides, Angelica Hernandez.

Back Row – L – R: Teresa Medina, Melissa Miranda, Kailyn Gonzales, Liliana Nieto, Anahi Arredondo, Azalea Flores, Katarina Cuellar, Emily Camacho. Cheer Coaches are Lisa Robinette and Stephanie Gonzalez. (Allan Jamail Photo)



North Shore Mustangs Cheerleaders

Front Row: (L to R): Hanna Garza, Paiton Bryant (Capt.), Yvey Garza (Capt.), SkaKerria Watson, Natalie Mata

Second Row: (L to R): Sidni Russell, Jalah Lee, Byanca Armenta, Melany Vargas, Ce'Kaya Mullen, Victoria Bell, Aaliyah Ross, Ja'Kya Bass, Mariah Hickman, Amari Netherly

Back Row: (L to R): Kateleen Garza, Shaniya Johnson, Ahneshey Walker, Leah Chanette

Varsity Cheer Coach: Mrs. Arlonda McGruder-Henderson (Allan Jamail Photo)

PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

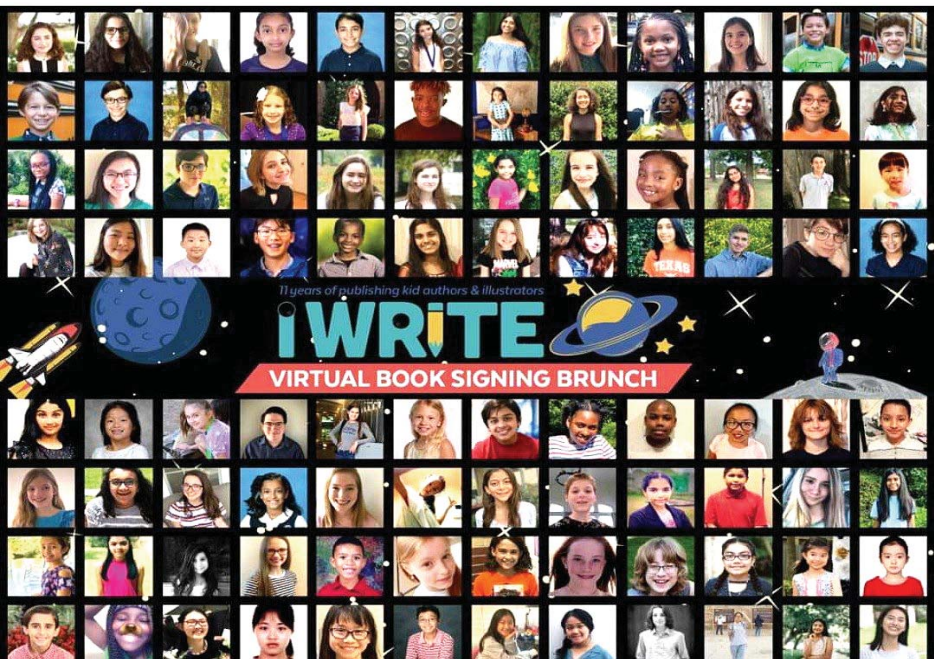
North Shore Mustangs vs Deer Park Deers - Thurs, Dec. 10th @ 7:00 PM @ GPISD Stadium.

This is 1st round of the 6A Div. 1 Region 3 Bi-district play.

Galena Park Yellowjackets vs Barber Hills Eagles - Fri, Dec. 11th @ 7:00 PM @ GPISD Stadium. This is 1st round of the 5A Div. 2 Region 3 Bi-district play.

Channelview Falcons vs CE King Panthers Fri. Dec. 11th @ 7:00 PM @ Panther Stadium.

This is 1st round of the 6A Div. 2 Region 3 Bi-district play



Galena Park students honored by iWRITE

The Houston nonprofit, iWRITE Literacy Organization, honored student authors and illustrators across the state of Texas at the 11th Annual Virtual iWRITE Luncheon & Book Signing of I Write Short Stories by Kids for Kids.

iWRITE offers students in grades 3 through 12 the opportunity to submit short stories, poems and artwork to an annual publishing contest. Each year, 65 winners are selected to be published in an anthology and are invited to a book signing celebration to honor them for their hard work. This event helps raise awareness for children's literacy and inspires kids to write their own stories. Due to COVID-19, iWrite hosted a virtual celebration with a special guest appearance and exciting presentations from newly published student-authors.

Jaley Mitchell and Christovia Johnson, North Shore Senior High School students; and A'Myrle Green, Purple Sage Elementary student were honored during the virtual book signing as published student-authors in the 11th anthology, I Write Short Stories by Kids for Kids.

Congratulations to these three GPISD students who are now published authors! Keep up the great work!

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How to protect your home from fires over the Christmas Holidays

While the holidays are a time for comfort and joy, some of the decorative aspects of the season can also bring increased fire danger to the home.

Christmas tree and decorations for the holidays covered by fire imagery in a graphic

Some Christmas decorations can also be potential fire hazards to be mindful of during the holidays. (Texas A&M AgriLife graphic)

"Fires are among the most common home-related dangers to be aware of during the holidays," said Joyce Cavanagh, Ph.D., Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service family and community health specialist, Bryan-College Station. Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day have been identified by the National Fire Protection Association as the three days of the year during which most candle fires occur. Some holiday-related fire dangers "In addition to candle fires, electrical fires and Christmas tree fires are also possible," Cavanagh said. "Christmas tree fires, in particular, have the potential to do serious damage to the home or cause injury to its occupants." She said some tips to help avoid candle and electrical fires are: Battery-powered LED candles are a safer alternative to wick candles.

Keep candles at least 1 foot



THIS HOUSE IN GALENA PARK BURNED WHILE THE OWNER WAS OUT OF TOWN FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

away from flammable items or surfaces.

Do not put candles directly on surfaces. Use a sturdy candle holder with drip plate.

Blow out candles when you leave the home or go to bed. Avoid using candles in the bedroom or other areas where people may fall asleep.

Replace candles before they burn all the way down or before the flame gets too close to the holder or container.

Keep lit candles in sight and away from areas where they may be knocked over.

In the event of a power outage, use flashlights or other battery-powered lighting instead of candles.

Use electric lights tested by an independent testing laboratory and place them only where appropriate.

If purchasing an artificial tree, choose one labeled fire-resistant. Replace old or worn-out Christmas tree lights and turn lights off when leaving home or going to bed.

Never use lit candles as Christmas tree decorations. Cavanagh also noted those choosing to have a live Christmas tree in their home should select one with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. "Be sure to regularly add water daily to the tree-stand reservoir and make sure the tree is at least 3 feet away from any heat source and isn't blocking a door or exit," she said.

HCCAC Public Meeting about Using the Arts to Revitalize the Eastside

NORTH CHANNEL – You're invited to "Using the Arts to Revitalize the Eastside," a conversation on arts and culture-driven community and economic advancement. Your registration allows you join Harris County Cultural Arts Council, east side residents, creatives, business leaders, county, state, and congressional representatives. We will hear presentations from Guest

speakers with the City of Tomball, Friendswood Development Corporation, Fifth Ward Redevelopment Corporation, and Emancipation Park Conservancy, (successful "artspreneurs," who have brought life and vibrancy back to their communities) as we discuss how to use the arts and culture as a catalyst for long-term community revitalization on the Eastside.

Meeting Details
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020
Time: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Location: 13334 Wallisville Rd. Houston, TX 77049
HCCAC is providing two participation methods to ensure all community members and stakeholders can safely participate.
In-Person: You can safely join us in person at

13334 Wallisville Rd., Houston, Tx 77049
we will be using only 25% of an 850 seat facility, allowing for the most aggressive levels of physical distancing! Facial coverings are required.
Click Here to Reserve a seat
Online: You can also safely join us via Zoom. Click the link to the right to connect.
Meeting ID: 988 7434 6028
Passcode: 6ha6nU
Click Here to Join Via Zoom
Distance COVID Guidelines
For our community members that will join us in person, we will follow all local and federal physical distancing guidelines to ensure a safe environment. Everyone entering the building must wear a facial covering for the entirety of the meeting. For more information on how to stay safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic, please visit CDC.gov

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COUNTY CONNECTION

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



We all knew this was coming

We all knew this was coming. The holidays are here, and we are simply not where we need to be to protect our community from COVID-19. Since late summer, there has been a deeply troubling loss in the momentum we'd begun to build as a community. Reopenings took place prematurely and, bit by bit, we've seen every indicator we use move in the wrong direction, again. No single day-to-day change has been dramatic, but, if you look at the trends, they are alarming and deadly:

Since mid-September, the 14-day average of daily new cases we report in Harris County has increased more than 4 times over to 1016 new cases reported per day.

Over the past month, that same number of average daily new cases has more than doubled.

We have seen our county positivity rate increase from its low in early October of 5.4%. We're now at 9.4%.

We're adding as many patients to our ICUs every day as we were in early June. We are tracking trends in our hospitalized COVID population just like the ones we were seeing before the crisis in June and July.

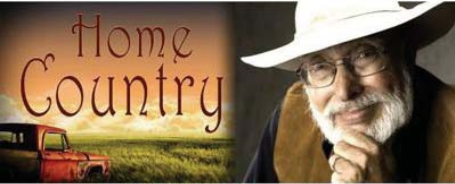
This is our wake-up call. These numbers don't even take into account all of those that were inevitably infected at Thanksgiving gatherings, and don't know it yet — we'll see those numbers in the next few weeks. We're eight months into this crisis, and I know we've all grown tired. But we can't give in. We are in the middle of fighting a war against COVID-19, and if we care about our friends, family members, and neighbors, we must do more.

First, cancel gatherings, large and small, with anyone outside your household. Right now we all have a desire to be together, I know. But now is not the time. By doing so, you put them, and yourself, at risk.

Second, get tested, whether or not you have symptoms or believe you've been exposed. The only way we can contain the virus now is for those who are carrying the virus to quarantine, and no one knows whether they are carrying the virus or not until they get tested. Visit ReadyHarris.org for all the free options, or check with your medical provider.

I understand all of this is a lot to ask of the community. But all of these measures will save lives, even if you don't immediately see it in front of you. Just like the virus, these sacrifices are invisible, but nonetheless substantial. And, as we make these sacrifices consistently and dutifully, we should be asking our state and federal government to meet us halfway. We need more measures to mitigate the impacts of the virus, and we need more economic relief for families and for the businesses that are suffering in the wake of this crisis.

Please try and enjoy the holidays despite this heavy weight we are all carrying. Take solace in knowing that as humans we've lived through much worse, and we will again. We are strong and we will get through this. Better days are coming.



Home Country
with Slim Randles

Talking Turkey

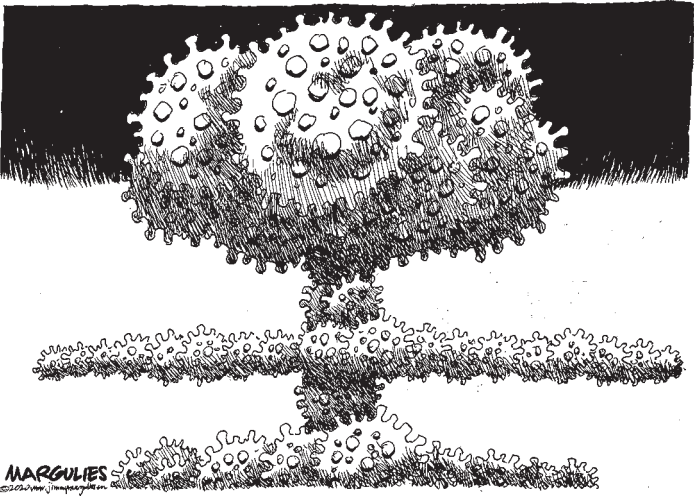
When it comes to our unique holiday of Thanksgiving, I think we all can see past the turkey and trimmings to what it's all about.

Oh, there are some historians who will tell us the Pilgrims really didn't share a meal with the Indians, and that's okay, because they got grant money to tell us that. And there are other historians who tell us that the Pilgrims and the Indians were pals and split the turkey and dressing. And that's okay, too. Historians have to eat just like the rest of us. But to me, that's immaterial. No matter who came up with the idea, it's a good idea. At least once a year we need to pause and give thanks in our own way for our blessings.

Of course, those of us who don't live in the big cities tend to be thankful for different things than those who may live in stuccoed cliff dwellings. We tend to look at the natural blessings more than the manmade ones. We tend to be grateful for the simpler things, like calves in the spring, and how clean they look before they discover mud. Folks in Home Country are deeply grateful that tasty rabbits arrive in large litters, and bears don't. When we think about it, we are thankful that we get eggs from hens and not from rattlesnakes, as checking the rattler house each morning could get 'way too exciting. When you consider that porcupines have quills, and deer don't, it gives us pause for praise, and we're happy that it's skunks who carry scent glands and not dairy cattle.

We are thankful, too, that hurricanes and tornadoes only happen in warm weather. It's bad enough to lose the barn without being chill-factored to death while it's happening. Down at the Mule Barn truck stop, Dud said he was thankful turkeys were stupid. When asked why, he said, "Ever look in a turkey's eyes? Not only is no one home, but someone shut off the lights somewhere back in the Middle Ages. A turkey has just enough brains to operate his heart and lungs." And you're thankful for that? We asked. And Dud said "Sure. If turkeys had been given the rudimentary intelligence of an empty clarinet case, we might be forced to eat sheep on Thanksgiving."


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STATE CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS

By Chris Cobler



Texas to get 1.4 million COVID vaccine doses

Texas is ready to distribute 1.4 million doses as soon as the COVID-19 vaccine receives federal government approval. Gov. Greg Abbott said the vaccines should be arriving the week of Dec. 14 and would be distributed to qualifying providers. Health care workers are the first in line to receive the medication, which needs to be given in two shots. Also first in line are residents of long-term living care centers, the Texas Department of Health Services announced. Texas' population is about 29 million, so the line is long. The state agency also announced the list of 109 hospitals in 34 of Texas' 254 counties that will receive the first doses. "The State of Texas is already prepared for the arrival of a COVID-19 vaccine and will swiftly distribute these vaccines to Texans who voluntarily choose to be immunized," Abbott stated. "As we await the first shipment of these vaccines, we will work with communities to mitigate the spread of COVID-19."

Electors set to vote
Texas presidential electors will convene Dec. 14 to officially cast their votes. The ceremony will start at 2 p.m. in the gallery of the House chamber in the State Capitol. The Texas election code calls for electors to meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday of December. Texas Secretary of State Ruth Hughs congratulated the governor, election workers and the voters for their efforts with this year's elections. "Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, this election was a resounding success, and turnout among registered voters was the highest in 28

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

State Capital



HIGHLIGHTS

By Chris Cobler

years as Texans exercised their right to vote," Hughs stated.

Workers comp challenges
The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges for the Texas workers' compensation system, the state agency said in its biennial report to the Legislature. During the pandemic, Gov. Abbott waived certain statutory requirements that affected COVID-19 workers' compensation claims. The Legislature is expected to consider whether to extend those exemptions, particularly for first responders and essential workers. "Some argue that these requirements should be permanently waived in situations involving a public health emergency, while others are concerned about the cost impact to governmental entities if this defense is waived," the report stated. During the pandemic, some insurance carriers have investigated COVID-19 claims involving firefighters, EMTs and peace officers. Forty-one percent of claims were denied for a variety of reasons, including whether a "statistically positive correlation with work" exists.

Abbott, Cruz in 2024?
The campaign for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination could start in Texas. The Republican National Committee has invited about a dozen potential presidential candidates to its January meeting in Amelia Island, Fla. The list includes Gov. Abbott and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas. Others on the list include Donald Trump, Mike Pence and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott.

The way from San Jose
Another California company is moving its headquarters to Texas. Hewlett Packard Enterprise will relocate its global headquarters from San Jose, Calif., to Spring. The new headquarters will open in early 2022, the Texas Economic Development Corp. announced. HP Enterprise already employs 2,600 people in Austin, Plano and Houston. The announcement did not specify how many new jobs would be added with the move of the headquarters. "Houston is an attractive market to recruit and retain future diverse talent and where we are currently constructing a state-of-the-art new campus," Antonio Neri, CEO of HP Enterprise stated.

Chicken fertilizer
Chicken litter led to a new business venture and state recognition for a young Texas couple. The Texas Farm Bureau honored Matt and Jessica Hanslik of Lavaca County as the 2020 outstanding young farmer and rancher. The recognition came during the organization's 87th annual meeting, which was held virtually this year. The Hansliks grow corn and hay, raise cattle and are part owners of an all-natural fertilizer company, in which they take chicken litter and "upcycle" it for use as farm fertilizer, the farm bureau said in its news release about the award. "The idea was sparked when Jessica, a manager at a national shell egg company, suggested they begin using chicken litter from local broiler houses to fertilize their fields," the Farm Bureau stated. "Now, in addition to using the all-natural fertilizer to boost yields on their own land, they sell the product to other area farms and ranches."

Chris Cobler is a board member and past president of the Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas. He welcomes email: ccobler@texaspress.com.

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THE POSTSCRIPT

By Carrie Classon

"Lower Expectations"

It is a year of lower expectations.

Every year, there is a chorus of folks urging us to lower our expectations for the holidays—buy less, consume less, worry less about having a picture-perfect holiday, and spend more time reflecting on what the holiday means to us. This year, it seems, we will finally get a chance to do that.

I was recently asked what my childhood memories of the holidays were, and I had a couple of vivid ones.

I saw myself sitting on the wooden stairway of the farmhouse where my mother grew up. There were far too many people to sit at a table, too many to get any kind of chair, even after all the folding chairs were called into service and the couch filled to capacity.

The seating was distributed on a strict seniority basis and, as I was very young, all the cousins my age would line up and sit on the stairs leading to the second floor of the farmhouse, one above the other, with our plates on our laps.

This was a fine arrangement, except that the farmhouse had only one bathroom and this stairway led to it. The stairway was narrow and some of my relatives were not. And so, we would lean over as far as we could (still with our plates on our laps) to allow the elderly relatives to make their way up to the bathroom at the top of the stairs.

That is a good memory. The year I turned five, I had chicken pox at Christmas. I spoke to my mother recently about that year. "Oh! That was a miserable Christmas," she said. And I'm sure, for her, it was. But my memory is not of the festivities I missed.

My mother stayed at home with me on Christmas Eve and all I remember was the small Christmas tree my parents put in my bedroom. My memory is not of being terribly sick, but of seeing those shining Christmas lights every time I opened my eyes and feeling loved and special enough to have my very own tree.

That is another good memory.

I've been telling my husband, Peter, that we are making good memories now. Of course, Peter and I are not working in a hospital or trying to teach school or dealing with grumpy retail customers. We are at home all the time except for our once every other week trip to the grocery store which is beginning to feel more like an exotic adventure every time we do it.

We are seeing no one so we can continue to visit Lori, who continues to fight cancer, and Peter cooks something for her every week and I read a bit more from my book (although by this time I have finished the first book and am reading a new one) and I know we will remember this time.

We won't have memories of a foreign landscape or a breathtaking performance or a fancy gathering. Instead, we'll remember the excitement of hearing the doorbell ring and getting to chat with a neighbor on our front stoop. Our memories from this year will be of the same homecooked meal, the same routine, the same clothes worn, the same neighbors greeted from across the lawn, the same dogs on my walk—as the days turned into weeks and the weeks turned into months. We will remember.

I might miss the excitement of a different kind of life. But I know I will remember the small, good things in this year of lower expectations.

Till next time, Carrie
Carrie Classon's memoir is called, "Blue Yarn." Learn more at CarrieClasson.com.

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Crosby moves to play-off as Bi-District Champions

CROSBY – Sharp play has defined the Crosby Cougars football team all season but in the final game of regular season a disappointing 29 to 24 loss to Nederland has made both teams bi-district champions of 12-5A-II.

It was Crosby's only district loss putting them at 6-1 in district. According to Coach Jerry Prieto, "We made some mistakes that we hadn't made all year but at the end of the day, they just outplayed us. I think we will re-focus and come out a different team Thursday. We ended up as Co-District Champions and the #2 seed."

The Cougars (7-3, 6-1) play Willowridge Eagles beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Bi-District Round of play-offs.

It all seemed that this game hinged on one less long yardage quarterback sneek that put Crosby behind after having caught up and surpassed with a touchdown and soon after field goal in the second.

A forced interception put Crosby up 15 – 17 at the half. It was obvious that the Bulldogs were playing with full excitement and at their highest potential.

The game was really decided

in the third quarter when Crosby pulled ahead 23 to 24 with under four minutes left in the quarter. However that is when the momentum shifted. The Bulldogs got the big break with a pass that gave them near 80 yards and a touchdown. Crosby denied them a two point conversion this time but the final score had been achieved.

The Cougars forced a turnover through interception but would fumble and not score again.



Long yardage quarterback sneeks aided both teams.

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Aggies look for big road win at Auburn:

Texans look to slow down Colts in AFC South

This strange and crazy college football season is winding down, while the NFL heads for the stretch drive as 2020 gets closer and closer to going away (thank goodness).

Jimbo Fisher's Texas A&M Aggies were supposed to play LSU last Saturday and if the game was held, it was A&M's first game since they dominated South Carolina on Nov. 7. Games against Tennessee and Mississippi had to be postponed due to players and football staffers testing positive for COVID-19. The Tennessee game has been rescheduled for Dec. 12. No word yet on if the Ags will host Mississippi on Dec. 19, the day of the SEC title game.

This Saturday, the Aggies have a tough road test at Auburn with hopes of closing fast and impressing members of the College Football Playoff (CFP) panel. If A&M can win out and finish with just one loss to No. 1-ranked Alabama, the CFP Selection Committee should consider the Aggies for one of the four CFP berths, that's why this game is so important to Fisher's team.

Tom Herman's Texas Longhorns would also like to finish strong and perhaps land a Jan. 1 bowl game. UT will visit a Kansas State team that was blown out by Iowa State, 45-0, two weeks ago.

In the NFL, the Texans will be out to throw a monkey wrench in the Colts' AFC South title hopes. Two weeks ago, Houston played perhaps its most complete game of the season when the Texans beat New England 27-20 in NRG Stadium. The loss could have brought an end to Bill Belichick's 2020 playoff hopes and has a lot of Patriots fans wondering, "is it time to rebuild?"

The Cowboys travel to Baltimore for a second straight Thursday games (they hosted Washington on Thanksgiving Day) and showed signs of life two weeks ago with a 31-28 win at Minnesota. While the Cowboys were winning on

KEENEY'S KORNER

BY MIKE KEENEY

the road, the Ravens dropped a 30-24 overtime decision at home to the Titans to fall to 6-4 on the season.

Before we take a look at the above mentioned games and a handful of others, let's review last week's record. A 7-3 week (two AISD varsity games were postponed) upped the season record to 75-36 (68%).

Now, onto this weekend's games.

NCAA

Indiana at Wisconsin: This one is a battle for survival in the Big 10 as both teams enter this game with one loss. Two weeks ago, Indiana lost a hard-fought, 42-35 decision at Ohio State. The Hoosiers were down by double digits in the second half and could have given up, but quarterback Michael Penix, Jr. (1,561 yards, 14 TDs) and wide receiver Ty Fryfogle (31 receptions, 642 yards, 7 TDs) made big-play after big-play to bring IU back. Wisconsin had a tough time moving the ball in its 17-7 road loss at Northwestern and the Badgers will need a better outing from quarterback Graham Mertz (375 yards, 8 TDs) if they hope to beat the high-scoring Hoosiers. My pick, Indiana 33, Wisconsin 27

Texas A&M at Auburn: No. 5-ranked Texas A&M heads to the plains of Alabama to take on an Auburn team that struggles on offense, but has playmakers on defense. A&M QB Kellen Mond (1,468 yards, 16 TDs) needs to continue to be his consistent self and let running back Isaiah Spiller (643 yards, 5 TDs) do his thing on the ground and fellow running

back Ainias Smith (26 receptions, 312 yards, 5 TDs) help out in the passing game. I think the A&M defense will get to Auburn quarterback Bo Nix (1,407 yards, 4 TDs) early and force a turnover or two. The Aggies need to start fast and take the starch out of the War Eagles. My pick, Texas A&M 26, Auburn 16

Texas at Kansas State: Texas is another team that has had its schedule upended due to COVID-19 and they face a KSU team that was humiliated two weeks ago when they were wiped out 45-0 at Iowa State. Texas will go as far as quarterback Sam Ehlinger (1,874 yards, 22 TDs/323 rushing yards, 7 TDs) will take them and he should have a big day against a weak Wildcat defense. Ehlinger will use speedy wide receiver Joshua Moore (22 receptions, 343 yards, 7 TDs) to make plays in the passing game and his stable of capable running backs to get things done on the ground. My pick, Texas 34, Kansas State 18

Oklahoma State at TCU: Mike Gundy's Cowboys had it all in front of them until they visited Norman, OK two weeks ago to take on arch rival Oklahoma. The Cowboys got behind big early, rallied to make it close but watched as OU pulled away in the fourth quarter en route to a 41-13 win and might have put a huge dent in OSU's Big 12 title chances. Quarterback Spencer Sanders (766 yards, 5 TDs, and running back Chubba Hubbard (581 yards, 5 TDs) were both slowed with injuries in the game, but should be back to full strength on Saturday when they visit Fort Worth to take on Gary Patterson's Horned

Frogs. TCU is led by dual threat quarterback Max Duggan (1,274 passing yards, 5 TDs/348 rushing yards, 6 TDs). OSU must contain Duggan if they hope to pull off the road win. It says here they will. My pick, Oklahoma State 33, TCU 26

NFL

Dallas at Baltimore: The Cowboys visit Baltimore for Thursday Night Football as the Ravens look to right the ship and make a run down the stretch. Two weeks ago, Dallas played as well as it has on offense since starting quarterback Dak Prescott went down with an ankle injury. Backup QB Andy Dalton (655 yards, 4 TDs) passed for two touchdowns and running back Ezekiel Elliott (675 yards, 5 TDs) had his first 100-yard game of the season (103 yards). Rookie wide receiver CeeDee Lamb had an amazing over-the-shoulder touchdown catch as was making plays all over the field in the Minnesota win. Dallas will need that sort of effort again this week if they hope to beat the Ravens on the road. Two weeks ago, Baltimore blew a second-half lead at home and fell in OT to the Titans. Quarterback Lamar Jackson (1,945 passing yards, 13 TDs/575 rushing yards, 3 TDs) is not the same QB that won the MVP in 2019, but he's got enough talent to turn things around in a hurry. Look for a better effort from the Ravens on both sides of the ball on Thursday as they take care of business against Dallas. My pick, Baltimore 30, Dallas 23

Indianapolis at Houston: The Colts come calling on Sunday afternoon at NRG Stadium to take on a Texans team that appears to have found new life after its 27-20 win over New England two weeks ago. In that game, quarterback Deshaun Watson (2,893 yards, 20 TDs) played perhaps his best game of the season passing for 344 yards, tossing two TD passes and running for another score. The defense also made plays at defensive

end J.J. Watt tipped four of Cam Newton's passes. The Texans will need another such effort against an Indy team that overcame a 14-point deficit at home to defeat Green Bay, 34-31 in overtime. Indy QB Phillip Rivers (2,683 yards, 14 TDs) got off to a slow start but has been on fire lately. This one could turn into a shoot out between Watson and Rivers, but the Colts get the nod because they have the better running game. My pick, Indianapolis 31, Houston 29

Cleveland at Tennessee: If you like smash-mouth football, then this is just the game for you. This game pits two teams that focus on the run first, and play tough defense. Two weeks ago, the Browns used the legs of running back Kareem Hunt (644 yards, 4 TDs) and Nick Chubb (575 yards, 5 TDs) and an opportunistic defense to defeat Philadelphia 22-17 in rainy Cleveland. While the Browns were winning at home, the Titans overcame a second-half deficit at Baltimore and rode Derrick Henry's (1,079 yards, 9 TDs) 29-yard touchdown run in OT to pull off the upset against the Ravens. Look for both teams to be run heavy in this one, which means the quarterback who makes the least mistakes, Baker Mayfield (1,850 yards, 15 TDs) or Ryan Tannehill (2,389 yards, 22 TDs) will come out the winner. My pick, Tennessee 23, Cleveland 20

New Orleans at Atlanta: Who needs Drew Brees when you have Taysom Hill? Just joking. Hill (233 passing yards, two rushing touchdowns) filled in admirably for Brees who is on injured reverse with a number of fractured ribs. Hill stepped in and led the Saints to a 24-9 win in NO over Atlanta two weeks ago. This week, they meet in Atlanta. Saints head coach Sean Payton wants Hill to manage the game and let his stars, running back Alvin Kamara (531 rushing yards, 8 TDs/67 receptions, 648 yards, 4 TDs) and wide receiver Michael Thomas (9

catches for 104 yards against the Falcons) take over the offense. The Saints defense also played well in the win over Atlanta two weeks ago, as that until recorded eight sacks and picked off Matt Ryan. Look for another overall solid team effort as the Saints look to remain in first place in the NFC South. My pick, New Orleans 33, Atlanta 20

Philadelphia at Green Bay: The Eagles have issues all over the place, but especially at quarterback. Carson Wentz has turned into a turnover machine, as evidenced by the 14 interceptions he has thrown thus far this season. Two weeks ago, Wentz threw two more picks as the Eagles lost at Cleveland, 22-17. While the Eagles were losing on the road, so too were the Packers, who blew a 14-point lead at Indy and lost 34-31 in overtime. Look for GB QB Aaron Rodgers (2,887 yards, 29 TDs), running back Aaron Jones (534 yards, 8 total TDs) and wide receiver Davante Adams (68 receptions, 847 yards, 10 TDs) to step up their games as they hand the Eagles another road loss. My pick, Green Bay 34, Philadelphia 20

Denver at Kansas City: Patrick Mahomes (3,035 yards, 27 TDs, just 2 interceptions) is sure fun to watch, isn't he? Two weeks ago he rallied the Chiefs from a 31-28 deficit with less than two minutes to go as he marched his team down the field and provided the winning touchdown strike to tight end Travis Kelce (66 receptions, 896 yards, 7 TDs). Mahomes should have another big night on Sunday Night Football against a game Denver team that ended Miami's five-game winning streak two weeks ago. The Chiefs have too much firepower for the Broncos. Look for them to continue their roll and look for Mahomes to stake his case for a second MVP award in the last three years. My pick, Kansas City 36, Denver 20

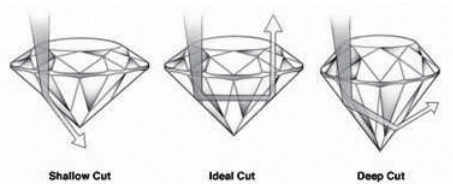
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Diamond Jim: “A Diamond’s Value & The 4 C’s.... Cut”

DIAMOND CUT

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The GIA Cut Grading System for the standard round brilliant diamond evaluates seven components. The first three, brightness, fire, and scintillation, consider the diamond’s overall face-up appearance. The remaining four, weight ratio, durability, polish, and symmetry, assess a diamond’s design and craftsmanship.

The quality of cut is crucial to the diamond’s final beauty and value. And of all the 4Cs, it is the most complex and technically difficult to analyze. If the diamond is cut either too deep or too shallow, the light entering the diamond will not reflect and return to the observer’s eyes properly and will cause the diamond to seem “dull” or “dead”. A diamond with an “Ideal” cut will offer the greatest amount of Brightness, Fire, and Scintillation.

BRIGHTNESS

Brightness is the intensity of the internal and external white light reflected from a diamond.

FIRE

Fire is the scattering of white light into all the colors of the rainbow.

SCINTILLATION

Scintillation is the sparkle a diamond produces, and the pattern of light and dark areas caused by reflections within the diamond.

Thank you for reading the “Ask Diamond Jim” column and for supporting the North Channel Star Newspaper!

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If you have questions pertaining to jewelry, watches, diamonds, precious stones, precious metals, and other questions related to the jewelry industry, email jmills@pineforestjewelry.com.

Yellowjackets shut out Eagles,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

first playoff game in 10 years and to be played on their home field.

The swarming Yellowjackets steel curtain defense held the Eagles run game to zero yards for the entire game, allowing only 50 yards made in passing. Jackets, Luis Sanchez, Brice Hernandez and Isaac Covarrubias led the team in tackles by their persistent pursuit of the Eagles offensive ball carriers.

The Jacket’s offense made 281 yards with 3 touchdowns (TD) plus a pick-six TD on a fumble recovery 65 yard run back by defensive lineman Isaac Covarrubias. Kicker Fernando Mendoza made 2 field goals, at 36 and 39 yards and the extra points.

Touchdowns were made by: A’Marion Kelly (1 TD’s), Arturo Garcia (1 TD’s), Jose Barrientos (1 TD) and Isaac Covarrubias (1 TD).

The Yellowjackets next game is the 1st round of the 5A Div. 2 Region 3 Bi-district playoffs with the Barber Hills Eagles, Friday, Dec. 11th at 7:00 PM at GPISD Stadium.



#3 Arturo Garcia senior Yellowjacket outruns Eagle defender 84 yards for a TD. (Allan Jamail Photo)



#4 A’marion Kelly outruns Eagle for Yellowjacket TD. (Allan Jamail Photo)

Scouts improve JC Dog Pound,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



At Left, Rebecca Gammag enjoys one of the new benches with her furry friend.



Below, Pictured here are the new shelves and re-organized containers that the scouts built for the Dog Pound..

CHARLOTTE’S WEB



More Than a Paycheck

Earlier this week, millions of Americans heard President-Elect Joe Biden as he named his selections for various cabinet members. Each of the nominees brought something unique to the team. They share the vision where all Americans have opportunities to live a better life. In watching the news clip, I heard something I had been taught years ago. I heard Mr. Biden mention that a job should be more than a paycheck.

I cannot count the number of times that my father and countless mentors have mentioned those same words to me throughout the decades that I have been employed. To my father’s generation, a job was not just a paycheck. He believed that with that paycheck came the responsibilities of homeownership as well as of being an automobile owner. To effectively own a home and a vehicle, you also had to insurance as well as money set aside for upkeep and repairs. To be able to successfully manage all of this, you had to have the ability to budget as well as keep records. All of these things were learned while working. Perhaps the best teachers were his older coworkers. People did not mind sharing their wisdom and along the way, many life-long bonds were built. Many of these employees stayed with one company their entire career, or at least in the same field of work.

While many of the next generation followed in their parents’ footsteps with seeking to buy a home, there were others that wanted to venture out and perhaps lease a place to live while they experienced a life with more educational, both personal and professional. These individuals wanted to try a career in a new city or at least a new part of the city they were from. Their paycheck was used for rent as well as for learning about things they were interested in, away from the job. Many times, there would be friends who would travel together learning about new places and a few might then move to the new city and perhaps change employers or even careers. Their jobs became a sort of networking tool.

As some companies began to take a stand for social responsibility and community reinvestment, often potential job candidates searched them out. Some of the most amazing workers I know are happy with less money and the chance to know their employer is making a difference in the community. These employees feel their job is definitely more than a paycheck. It gives them the opportunity to work alongside of others who have a passion.

Over the past few years, tension has been present in many areas of our lives, including the workplace. Some employees were afraid to voice an opinion or even try to get to know coworkers. There was a looming cloud above them as if they were seen as enjoying the job, they were not responsible. There were individuals who were trying to meet someone else’s unspoken expectations. A job became more like a daily grind.

After listening to the President-Elect, I felt hope, I sensed empathy for others and I felt like we are headed to a place of the job being more like times past, when it was more than a paycheck. When you add empathy and compassion, you add hope. I pray in the future; we all realize that a job is more than a paycheck. It is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others.

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